Submitting Successful OAUG Conference Papers

Inviting User-Submitted Content to Exchange Real-World Knowledge and Expertise

By Kaberi Nayak, Lissa English and Melissa Sider

Some of the valuable feedback we received following COLLABORATE 14 indicates that attendees want to see more presentations delivered by their peers – fellow users of Oracle Applications. Although the OAUG typically accepts more than half of the user papers that are submitted to the call for papers, less than 20 percent of all papers submitted come from users.

We want to increase the number of user-presented sessions at COLLABORATE 15 and encourage everyone to consider submitting a presentation. As a conference presenter, you will:

- Have the opportunity to give back to the users' community by sharing ideas, tips and tricks, or lessons learned

- Enhance your professional development, visibility and connections

- Receive a free conference registration

As members of the OAUG conference leadership team, each of us has valuable experience to share to increase the chances your paper is selected for COLLABORATE 15. The following information outlines the selection process the OAUG follows and is not necessarily followed by the IOUG or Quest paper selection committees.

Tips and Tricks for Successful Paper Submissions

Start With a Solid Idea. Consider how your knowledge and experience can help other users solve a problem; develop your presentation idea with that in mind. Be specific about how attendees will benefit and w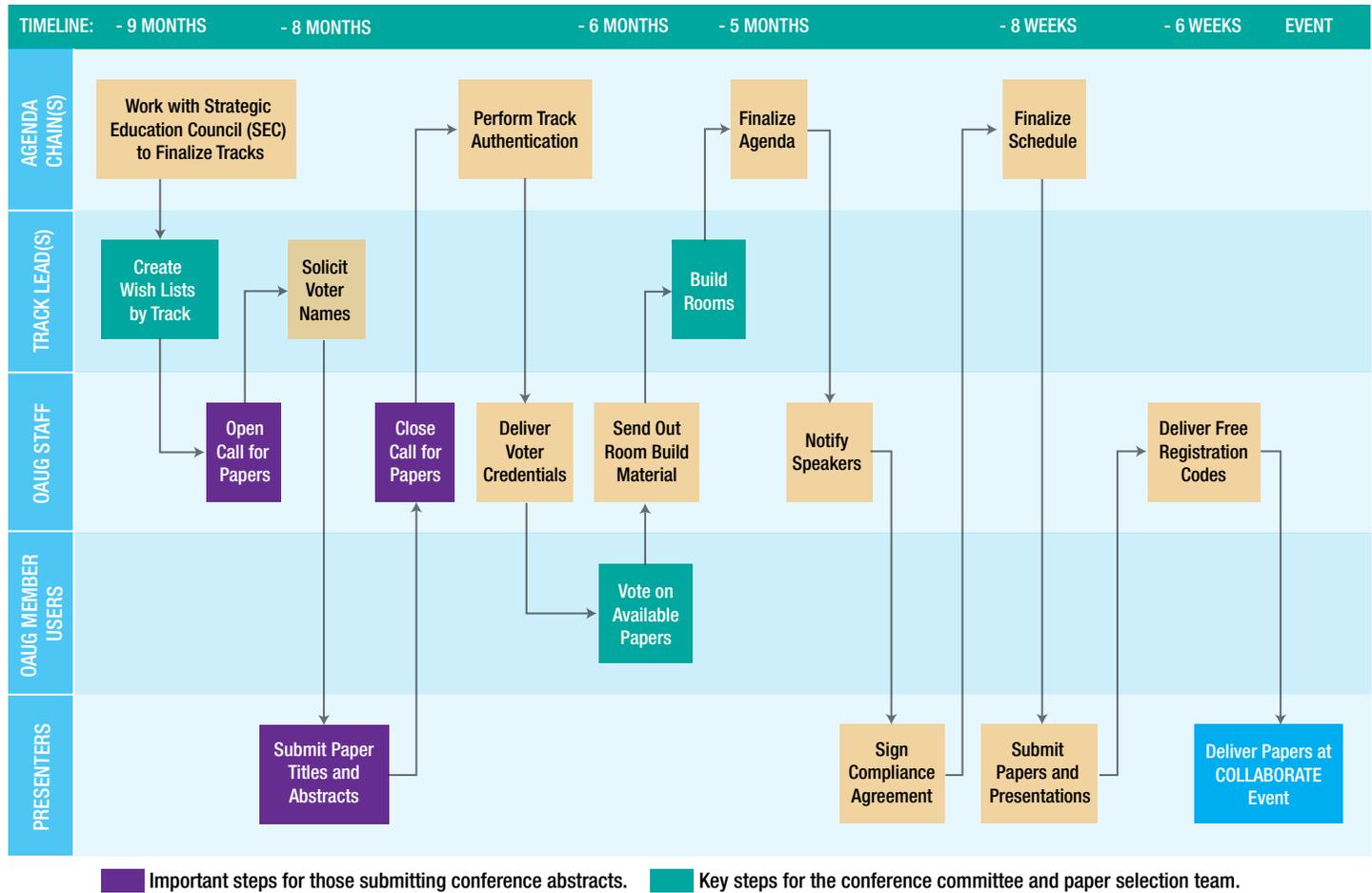hat they will learn. Try to select a topic with broad appeal that is not too narrowly focused. Remember, there are lots of new users at these events, so basic topics can be very appealing.

Conference educational tracks are determined by the COLLABORATE 15 Strategic Education Council (SEC), which includes representatives from the OAUG, IOUG and Quest. The OAUG publishes a wish list of topics that are of interest to each educational track. Choosing a topic from the wish list increases your chances of acceptance. Seek input from your peers when formulating your title and abstract.

Submit Early, Submit Often. If you have several ideas, it can be beneficial to submit multiple topics to the call for papers.

Create a Catchy or Descriptive Title. A catchy, descriptive title shows that you can be clever and will attract attention

Figure 1: Paper Selection Process

TIMELINE:	- 9 MONTHS	- 8 MONTHS	- 6 MONTHS	- 5 MONTHS	- 8 WEEKS	- 6 WEEKS	EVENT

Figure 1: Paper Selection Process flowchart with swim lanes for Agenda Chain(s), Track Lead(s), OAUG Staff, OAUG Member Users, and Presenters.

Important steps for those submitting conference abstracts. ■ Key steps for the conference committee and paper selection team.

during the paper voting process. Be sure that your clever title still accurately describes the objective and content of your presentation.

Proofread Your Entry. Grammar and spelling count. Poor grammar and incorrect spelling can disqualify your paper from being accepted. The selection committee will wonder what the presentation and paper will be like if the abstract is poorly written.

Co-present with Others. Finally, consider co-presenting with other people. Preference is given to user-submitted content to maximize the opportunities for user-to-user learning and networking. However, if you are a user working with a systems integrator or contractor, consider presenting together. Identify topics that emphasize the value of the presentation

for other users (not a sales presentation). Always give the user top billing to highlight that it is a user presentation.

The paper selection process (**Figure 1.**) is unique to the COLLABORATE conferences and the OAUG, however there are similarities across all conference paper processes. Once the call for papers opens, you will have about 10 weeks to draft and submit your title, abstract and learning objectives. These are the only pieces that are needed for submission. There is no need to write a presentation or white paper until your idea is accepted.

For COLLABORATE, the call for papers is followed by a voting period, during which any OAUG member company in good standing can elect a representative to vote on papers. Voting is "blind," which means that voters can only

see the title, abstract and objectives of the presentation; this is why these elements are critical in the selection process. Voters cannot see the author or the author's company. Once all the votes are tallied, each room (or track) is built by a team of people who understand the topic area. These teams are made up of OAUG Geographic (Geo) and Special Interest Group (SIG) leaders and Education Committee members. The teams meet via conference calls to discuss the slate of papers that will be scheduled into each timeslot for their room. Once the rooms have been built, submitters are notified of the status of their submissions. Hopefully you receive a congratulatory message, and then the fun really begins. You will receive specific, detailed instructions from the speaker coordinator at the OAUG,

Tips and Tricks for Successful Paper Submissions

- **Start with a Solid Idea**
  - **Solve a problem**
  - **Be specific about the benefit and learning outcome**
  - **Appeal to a broad audience**
  - **Align with the wish lists for the conference tracks**
  - **Seek input from peers**
- **Submit Early/Submit Often**
- **Create a Catchy or Descriptive Title**
- **Proofread Your Entry**
- **Co-present With Others**

highlighting expectations for the submission of your presentation and white paper. Once your presentation is submitted, you will receive your free conference registration!

The COLLABORATE 15 call for papers opens August 19, 2014. This year, the OAUG will be sponsoring additional opportunities to assist Oracle users with identifying, drafting, refining and submitting paper abstracts. Watch for this additional COLLABORATE 15 information. ⊕

Kaberi Nayak is a lead applications DBA with more than 20 years' experience. She has served on the OAUG Board of Directors and in the role as chair on both the Education and COLLABORATE Agenda Committees.

Melissa Sider is Director of Communications at AST Corporation. She has served the OAUG in several roles over the past 15 years, including Education Committee Chair and COLLABORATE Agenda Chair.

Lissa English is Global Training Manager at Amway. She has served the OAUG in multiple roles over the past 18 years, including COLLABORATE Agenda Co-Chair, Education Committee member and currently serves as the OAUG President Elect.